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THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN JAPAN.

BY THE REV. WM. ELLIOT GRIFFIS, D.D. AUTHOR OF "THE MIKADO'S
EMPIRE."

As the one white man living who, at a daimio's capital, saw the working of the Japanese feudal system, I cannot but call attention to the contrast in the methods of government in Japan in 1871 and in 1902. I shall never forget the excitement, the pale faces, the set teeth, and the angry scowls when the Mikado's order arrived in Fukui, bidding all the barons throughout the country to turn over all property and authority to the central Government, to leave their ancestral castles and land and come and live in Tokio. Men thrust their two swords in their belts and went in sullen mood from the Government house homeward, to brood over their "wrongs" and to meditate on the outcome of the unexpected. In good old-fashioned style, they plotted to kill the man thought to be locally responsible. Then it was government "despotism tempered by assassination." The first idea was that, when a man in office interfered of his own will with custom, he must be removed by the sword. In like manner, when a reformer called for change, he must seal his document with his own blood—that is, commit hara-kiri in order to show the sincerity of his convictions.

Then Chinese ideas reigned. Originality in thought was a crime. The golden age was in the past. Wisdom had died with the ancients. True progress consisted in returning to the ideals which had been settled æons ago. Change meant sacrilege and treason. The Mikado, of course, could do no wrong. The wicked ones were the ministers of the Government. Those who differed from the ministers in convictions of policy, who felt bound to remove them, were "instruments of Heaven's vengeance," who,

after prayer, purification, and consecration—often reinforced in practice by many cups of *saké*—went forth to their bloody work with a document in their bosom explaining their pure purpose. After they had removed the head of the offending minister or properly slashed him to pieces, they opened their own bowels or surrendered themselves,—usually to be glorified after death, their graves enjoying perpetual decoration-day.

Matters are different now, though not all, for “things are not what they seem.” Japanese words, though translated into English words that are supposed to be equivalents, do not have the same depth, perspective, fulness of contents, that English words have. History, heredity, race traits, are not altered in a day. We have in Japan a written constitution, parties, elections, and very much modern governmental machinery at home and abroad, and the Japanese wear clothes and decorations such as are seen in Europe. Nevertheless, let those who use the English language expect to be puzzled, as long as they suppose that the same words represent the same things in East and West, or that “the people” in the United States means the same as “the people” in Japan.

Nothing puzzles visitors in Japan so much as her political “parties.” The smart interviewer on the world’s highway will find that a famous statesman in Tokio is a “radical” to-day, a “conservative” to-morrow, and a man “in the middle of the road” the next noon. Indeed, so long as the traveller is under the spell of his own speech, he will give up the problem as insoluble. And, in truth, how is it possible for the globe-trotter, or even for the recent resident in Japan, to understand the phenomena of 1902, unless he knows not only something of Japanese history and the great Japanese personalities of our era, but also of the quality of the meat on which these new Cæsars have fed. Despite the fact that two or three Japanese names to-day loom up as though they were the makers of the New Japan, it is the hereditary forces that dominate. The intellectual history of the two or three brilliant men who stand in the world’s gaze as “creators of modern Japan” is almost as important as their personality.

As the perspective of forty years now reveals it, the truth seems to be that there are in Japan two lines of thought and training, two courses of intellectual and ethical force. With even more reason and propriety than we apply the terms “conservative”

and "progressive," we may describe the two main parties in Japan as the missionary or the Anglo-American party, and the Shinto or Prussian party. In reality, there are no conservatives; all are progressive and, in certain phases, radical.

On the one side we see such men as Okuma, Soyéshima, Itagaki, Shimada, and hosts of others, successors of a noble line who have ended their labors, whose purpose is not only political but ethical. They are the true representatives of the commonwealth and the people, liberal in politics, but conservative in social matters. They uphold personal and public morality. They believe in a written constitution which makes the ministers responsible to the Congress or Diet, to the people, and not to the sovereign. They have been educated in the historical documents and writings of English and American publicists. They admire English and American constructive men of action and wisdom. They have been trained in the art of conference, of assemblage for the public good. They do not believe in making sovereignty reside in the throne, but in the people rightly educated and controlled by high ethical standards and practices. They hold that the best things to borrow from the Occident are high ethical standards, and that the best things to conserve in the native civilization are the old ideals, transfigured and adapted to the new age of Bushido or Japanese chivalry. Their fundamental idea is that enunciated by Gladstone, "trust of the people, tempered by prudence."

The Shinto or Prussian party is based on the idea that all sovereignty resides in the Emperor; that the constitution is his gift to the nation; that the ministers must always be responsible to the sovereign and not to the Diet; that the Upper House must be the Emperor's creation and always his support; that the greater part of the constitution must be rigid and unamendable; that there must be great orders and dignities conferred by the Emperor and that everything must centre in him; that parties have nothing to do with the policy of the government; that even in the Lower House, as well as in the Upper, legislators are simply advisers, and the chief minister of the imperial will is the chancellor, who has subordinates but no associate; while, all through the body politic, the governors and the deliberate gatherings are to follow out the example of the upper personnel of the empire. In their strictest view, there is no state of Japan apart from the Imperial family.

Is it not something like a great political miracle, or would it not be such, to have party government possible in a country and among a people whose leaders were born and reared in feudalism? To understand, even in a measure, Japanese parties in 1902, we must look back to their first beginnings.

In feudalism there existed no such thing as "the people," in any political sense. The sword had won and the sword held. Conquest and military dominion for six centuries, from the sixth to the twelfth, in Japan passed into feudalism for six centuries more, from the thirteenth to the nineteenth, during which the sword was the only ruler, though tempered by Buddhism and chivalry. Having no pressure of enemies from the outside, there arose of necessity two centres of government, the Throne and the Camp, the Mikado in Kyoto among monks and nobles, the Shogun in Yedo among vassals and soldiers—in a word, theory and practice.

After Perry's apparition, native forces from within and the alien energies combined to produce a new resultant. First duarchy and then feudalism fell. An irresponsible ministry, made up of the victors of the Revolution of 1868, governed the country in the Mikado's name. Within a decade, two lines of thought were visible under the two leaders of opinion, Fukuwaza and Nakamura. The one economic and materialistic, the other ethical and socially conservative, issued in something like parties. Yet note that the genesis of these was not from the people, but from those scholars who in both body and mind had visited Occidental countries. It was not until 1870—when the American teachers had been eleven years in the land—that the idea of popular freedom took form. Then common folks, as well as the gentry, began to act. A decade of tremendous political agitation followed, during which the most remarkable phenomena of method and opinion startled the men of the old order. Plots thickened the air, assassinations were frequent, and the prisons were enlarged to hold editors and writers. The hand of the Government was forced, and in 1879 the Emperor gave his promise of a constitution and of a Diet to be formed in 1889. The beginning of the next decade was marked by the formation of the three parties, Liberal, Progressive, and Constitutional Imperial. Discussion and dissemination of ideas powerfully educated the nation. In 1889 the constitution was proclaimed, and the new Government came into

being. We have had thirteen years of representative and party government, marked by frequent cabinet crises, dissolution and prorogation of parliament, only one ministry lasting twenty months, and only one parliament, the last one, continuing through the full period for which the members were elected.

Let us look at the platforms of these three parties. In theirs, the Liberals (1880) say nothing about the throne or the Emperor. The four principles laid down aim at the full extension and permanent preservation of the freedom and rights of the people; they declare that all men ought to be equal as to their rights, and that a constitutional government was best adapted to Japan. Here the ideas are English and American, with a flavor of the French, or, as some might say, the revolutionary and abstract. With many pure and able men, there was a long tail of uncertain and dangerous characters.

On the other hand, the Progressist party (1881) came chiefly from the middle class of society, and was made up of men perhaps better read and self-controlled and more anxious for safeguards. They laid emphasis less on the theories of Rousseau, Mill, and Spencer, than on the experience and the wisdom of those nations to whom self-government is second nature. In their platform we find that they aim to support and maintain the dignity of the throne, as well as to promote the happiness of the people. They believe that internal reformation must precede national expansion. They aim at the establishment of local self-government, with as little interference from the central Government as possible. They call for the gradual extension of popular suffrage as society improves, and urge the extension of commerce and the avoidance of political complications with foreign countries. Not a particle of abstract theory can be recognized in this platform, which is reformatory, as against the revolutionary ideas of the Liberal Party. The Progressists inherited the ideas of the old Economic party, taking Bentham and Mill as their great teachers, without, however, reaching the noble ideas of the pure-minded Englishmen. Too often the working politician's conception of utilitarianism became a simple engine for getting office, while among the more ignorant it was the easy slide into a licentious life. In fact, both the liberalism and the utilitarianism of the lofty-minded English thinkers, as interpreted by men no longer bound by the old *vincula* of feudal ethics, wrought incalculable

moral woe upon Japan. Nevertheless, the influence of these Occidental theories was powerful in tempering absolutism and in hastening the dawn of constitutional government.

It could hardly be expected that in the new political formations, when the first disentanglement from feudalism had been made, that there would be two parties only, for an idea and an institution, older by a millennium and a half than modern Occidental philosophy, was Mikadoism—the core of all Japanese history. Those who knew the nation's story saw clearly that neither the Liberal nor Progressist party was a sufficient exponent of Japanese life. They were not surprised at the formation (1881) of the Constitutional Imperial party, which, in four out of the eight principles asserted, emphasized the sovereignty of the Emperor as the basis of all order, the fountain of national life, and him as the giver of the constitution. "We shall not claim," said they, "any share in framing the constitution." The other four declarations insisted on the separation of the military from political affairs, the independence of the judicial power, the bicameral system of legislation, and liberty of speech, writing and assembly within the limits of the law and not prejudicial to peace and order. In a word, here is Shinto, though with its dogmas ignored. The demand is for government emanating wholly from the Emperor, though differentiated into the three great divisions of executive, legislative, and judicial, according to modern ideas, as some might say, or after the Hebrew prophet, who declared that "the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King, He will save us." A devout Shintoist in full faith, or a Constitutional Imperialist in hope of office, might, with prudent reservations, replace the name of "the Lord" with that of the Mikado, and we should have the platform of his party. As matter of fact, this party was organized by men already in office to support the cause of "the Government"—of modern political phrase—against the two parties made up of men out of office. Its real, though not professed, leader was Count, now Marquis, Ito, and the platform was drafted under his eye, if not by his own pen. In fact, some of its phrases actually reappear in the text of the constitution. It was a dyke built around the divine right of the Emperor, and was intended to keep the throne impregnable against the rising waves of democracy. For their political philosophy, in order to justify

themselves by Occidental precedents and teaching, the Imperialists of Japan adopted the theories of sovereignty taught in Germany, embodied in Prussia, and having its contemporaneous exemplar in Bismarck. On the issue of the Emperor's order to frame a constitution, Count Ito started for the West, passing through the United States and Great Britain, and making his main stay as to time, place, and intellect in Prussia. Count Bismarck being then in the height of his power, Ito learned from him the secret of a nominally constitutional government—making the ministers the servants first and always of the Mikado, and only mediately of the nation. Indeed, it was under the subjective influence of the Iron Chancellor that the constitution of Japan was drafted. Thus, with a Government in which all power was lodged in the Emperor, who had a chancellor for his executive minister, and legislative chambers whose function it was to discuss, but only within certain limits to make law, Ito returned to Japan in 1883 after a year's absence. He began the reorganization of Government by building around the throne a whole series of dykes of aristocratic orders, so as to keep back the on-rush of the rising democratic tide. Many opponents were won over by the decorations, titles, or offices so freely showered. When finally the constitution of 1889 was promulgated, it was found to be in accordance with the ideal of the Constitutional Imperialists, to the bitter disappointment of the men of the other parties. Instead of being a covenant between the throne and the people, or in any sense the natural outcome of prolonged agitation for liberty on the part of the nation, it was rather, like a French creation, a work of art and logic, and of extraordinary rigidity, in which only a certain percentage of power was given to the two houses of the Diet. The great structure was built upon the idea that the Mikado is the sole source of authority, and that he not only reigns, but governs. While the law of the Lower House, of the election of its members, and of finance was set forth as amendable by ordinary legislation, the law constituting the Upper House was really an imperial ordinance, amendable only at the initiation of the Emperor, with the consent of the House of Peers only. This Upper House was to be composed of the higher nobility as life members, of a certain number of the lower nobility elected by members of their respective orders, and of citizens nominated by the Mikado from among the highest tax-payers. In a word,

the Upper House in both its organization and legislation was as another dyke against democratic tendencies. The legislative system was thus modelled closely on that of Prussia, and the real significance of the idea of two legislative bodies is obscured or lost, the crown being able at any time to control the Upper House by creating new peers. In short, the duty of the Diet is to give advice and to consent, the chambers being regarded as a council, and not as assemblies which are delegated by the people to control the Government.

Such being the case, it seems hardly possible that there should be any real party government in Japan. Foreign visitors, misled by phrases and the eloquence of native writers about "Japan's doing in a generation what it required other nations a thousand years to accomplish," find themselves in hopeless perplexity. For us it is not to praise or blame, but only to state the facts. Perhaps it was best that the nation emerging from feudalism should be governed only by the strong hand and the subtle brain. For a generation the Government seemed to rest with a committee of gentlemen from the two clans of Satsuma and Choshu, the former excelling in military, the latter in civil, abilities—thus making a perfect combination, especially when occasionally a man of Tosa or Hizen was friendly helper. Speaking roughly, the great revolution of 1868 was carried through and on by a committee of four, Iwakura, Okubo, Saigo, and Kido. When Saigo dropped out, Okuma the Hizen man came in, while Itagaki of Tosa led the popular agitation for the abolition of "clan government." Itagaki had been called the Rousseau of Japan, and Okuma the Peel, though the avowed political purpose of both is identical. Yet, to show the inherent weakness of Japanese politics, regarded from the point of view that party government is the ideal one, while Itagaki was the moving spirit of the Liberals, Okuma organized a separate party called the Progressists. Thus, in the last analysis, a student discovers a difference of platform in words indeed, but discerns that the lines of attraction and repulsion are personal and not political. Strictly speaking, in Japan there has never been, with the exception of Saigo's leadership of the Satsuma rebellion of 1877, any real reaction. There are no Conservatives in politics. All have wanted to go forward, all desired constitutional and representative institutions, all urged the complete transformation of the Japanese into a

modern man. It has been simply a question when,—whether to wait or not until the common people, as distinguished from the *samurai*, were prepared for the new ideas and methods. All pressed to the goal of reform in a written constitution and houses of parliament; yet, in the first actions which interpreted the platforms, one notes an utter absence of profound differences on ethical or moral principles. The predominant motive of the first agitation, under the name of party, was to oust the men in office and secure their positions.

At the first session of the Diet, it was soon evident that the consuming purpose of “the Opposition” was to get out those who were in, and that they looked upon the constitution and the Diet as the instruments by which they could effect their purposes. In the wise ambiguity in the text of the constitution—which neither admits nor denies the principle of parliamentary mandates—they found a new platform. Making an interpretation of the constitution which suited their purpose, and with obstruction as their weapon, they sought to paralyze the power of any ministry which would not obey the majority vote of the Lower House. For three years obstruction in the Diet was met by the Government’s calling on the Emperor to prorogue and dissolve.

In 1894, during the war with China, all squabbles were forgotten in the presence of foreign danger. The first years of division were followed by an era of coalition, the votes on the budget for prosecuting the war being unanimous. When peace was made with China, the political war in Japan broke out afresh. The Progressists were chronic implacables, and the Liberals refused to support the Ito ministry in the *post-bellum* scheme of taxation of 1896.

Until 1898, therefore, government by party was a total failure. The capture of the offices long held by “the clansmen” had not been effected, nor had even the personal hopes of the would-be reformers been fulfilled. They now turned to the idea of union, and in 1898 the Progressists and Liberals fused together, adopting the name of the Constitutional Party, and commanding a working majority in the Lower House led by experienced chiefs. Seeing this, Ito did what his enemies say he always does when great difficulties confront him. He refused to face the obstacle and resigned. Okuma and Itagaki were called to form a cabinet. They did so, and for a time hope was high, but the theories of men out

of office are apt to suffer a sea change when in office. The new people in power showed the same extraordinary avidity to put their friends and relatives under salary which had so long characterized the "clan" statesmen. To the disappointment of the nation and the mortification of the unselfish men of the parties, the new government went to pieces in six months.

Among the leaders of the Liberals was the famous Mr. Hoshi Toru, minister in Washington, a man never choice either in his language or methods, and the typically "strong" man in "practical" politics. When in America he learned the methods of the "bosses." This past master of political art as practised in London, New York, and the Tokio of the period, looking with no kindly eye upon the fusion of Liberal and Progressist, hurried back to Japan to break it up. From the moment of his arrival on home ground, it was evident that Manhattan Island methods had become fully operative in Tokio. He soon had control of the municipal council of the chief city of the Empire, whereupon patriotism and purchaseability were considered by many as interchangeable terms. His dexterity and nimbleness added immensely to his reputation, and on the fall of the Okuma cabinet he was the man in all eyes.

What was now to be done? The Progressists and Liberals had reformed on their old lines of personal affinities and antipathies, with ethics and policies in the far background. They now found they must make friends with Marquis Ito and "the elder statesmen," if victory were to be coaxed to perch on their banners. But, on one point, Ito was as implacable as he was consistent. He refused to adopt the principle of parliamentary cabinets, and he declared that, if he were made leader of a new party, he must be master. It may be true, as Shakspeare declares, that "misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows," but, in the new and astonishing combination of Japanese politics, present hope excelled all past misery. The new bed of 1901 contained not a party, but a "kai," or "Association of Friends of the Constitution," and the chief plank in its platform was—that ministers were not responsible to the Diet! Thus on the one hand they (the Rikken Seiyu-kai) surrendered to the "clan statesmen" the very principle for which they had long been fighting, while on the other they handed over to the Progressists a principle which gave Opposition an intelligible principle or platform. In brief, person-

ality was as yet stronger than partyism in Japan. The strong man was too great for the inchoate particles gathered under a name, for Ito was the one magnet that held the particles together. Happily, too, there was Mr. Hoshi Toru, who had long since learned the elasticity of American-built political platforms, and could read promises written both in sympathetic ink and in quickly-fading aniline. He understood not only how to take assertions in the Pickwickian sense, but he knew also just when a man, even though dead, was "a good enough free-mason until after election." Mr. Toru confirmed all halting or recalcitrant members of the new combination, by showing them that Marquis Ito's remarks about "irresponsible cabinets" were less disturbing than they might suppose, being intended merely as a polite verbal concession to conservative opinion. In a word, here was a "deal," between the subtle, "all round" clan statesman Ito, and the strong man Hoshi. The latter, for melting his party into the Seiyu-kai, was to govern economics and education, furnishing the popular elements of the new civilization, while Ito was to control the national policy in the Prussian style, in order to prevent reaction and to secure continuance of progress.

Among the old "clan statesmen" who considered that the Marquis Ito had gone back on his former principles and basely deserted his old comrades, was Yamagata, Field-Marshal in the Chino-Japanese war. The House of Peers was even more scandalized, and determined on quick vengeance against the traitors in their camp. Disgusted and roused to wrath also by the methods and prominence given to the gentleman returned from Manhattan, as well as Washington, they determined to show that they possessed, and could use, power. It came as a genuine surprise to Ito, when, having floated his financial measures through the Lower House, he found a rock in his way in the attitude of the Upper House. Almost as a matter of course, say his enemies, Marquis Ito appealed to the Emperor to intervene, and the difficulty was temporarily adjusted. Nevertheless, such recourses to the Mikado, too often repeated, might shake even the throne itself. Since 1868, there had been forty ministries, of an average duration of seven months, none surviving more than twenty months. There had been seven constitutional cabinets in eight years. The Diet had been dissolved by the Government five times, and there had been six suspensions of the Lower House for "unreasonable op-

position" to the Government. Hence, seeing complications about to arise almost as disagreeable as those of the first year or two of parliamentary government, the subtle Ito flinched again, and resigned. This is what they say who declare that Ito is not a statesman, but an opportunist: "So long as things are going on smoothly without any great obstacles to his policy, he appears to be a great statesman; when the political world becomes stormy and a grave disaster is staring him in the face, his only alternative is to evade his responsibility by retiring from his position before a final catastrophe befalls him."

The new ministry that came into power was formed of the "elder statesmen," that is, of the men of 1868. They were unconnected with any party, and were led by Yamagata. It was evident that during their lifetime the principle of parliamentary cabinet would never be openly acknowledged as constitutional. The ministry of "the elders" lasted through the military operations of the Boxer period in China in 1900. When new diplomatic complications arose, requiring the highest civic ability, the Yamagata ministry ended late in September, 1900. The Emperor, using almost the language of filial respect, called Marquis Ito, for the fifth time, to form a cabinet. When this body began its work in October, instead of having, as in former instances, six or seven, or at least three or four, of the "elders" of 1868, it was seen that Marquis Ito alone, of the noble band of 1868, was now in office, all but himself being young men educated abroad, including five ex-Liberals, one being the "strong man," Hoshi Toru. The latter was so violently assailed by his enemies and in the press, which pointed to him as the source of the corruption in the Tokio Municipal Council, even stigmatizing him as "the chief of the public robbers," that Mr. Hoshi called for a public trial. He was acquitted. He then resigned from the cabinet, on the eve of the opening of the Diet.

The new Ito ministry suffered from the long illness of its chief, and before it had been six months in office split upon a rock. The tremendous expansion of Japan's naval, military, and commercial programme, following two wars in China, called for an amount of money which Japan had not in her possession. The alternative was a foreign loan, against which, with more sentiment than sense, many Japanese revolted. While all the rest of the cabinet believed in steady progress, the Minister of Finance

wished to suspend the programme of expansion, and he obstinately persisted, wishing not only to defer but to postpone enterprise. By the 4th of May, 1901, the seriousness of the situation, foreshadowing impending collapse, was set forth in an amusing sketch in a comic paper at the capital. The residence of the obstinate Minister of Finance was at Toad Lake, and the crest of the Marquis Ito is the wistaria. The picture represented a huge toad squatting placidly under wistaria blossoms, while sprays of water fall on it from all directions. The point of the satire lies in a Japanese proverb describing what is absolutely useless—"pouring water in a frog's face." On the 21st of May, 1901, Ito went to the palace and tendered his resignation. The Minister of Finance refused to resign, but he had to obey the mandate of the Emperor. On June 8th, a new cabinet, made up for the most part of relatively obscure men and on the principle of absolute indifference to parties, was organized by the former Minister of War, the brilliant General Katsura. Next to strategy and tactics in the field, his powers lie in the line of conciliation and unity. In personal methods he is the opposite of Ito. On the 21st of June, "the strong man," Hoshi Toru, was assassinated by a genuine Conservative, Iba Sotaro, who held tenaciously to the old ideals, and was a close reader of the Chinese books which recommend the removal by murder of offensive politicians. This was the sixth actual assassination, and the ninth attempted, since 1868, on high officers of the Japanese Government, the record in the previous decade of men slaughtered for their political opinions being much larger.

Under the Katsura cabinet, things have worked smoothly because political agitation has temporarily quieted down, but this is only the lull before the storm.

In the constitutional development of Japan every experiment, except the coming and inevitable one of pure party government, has been tried, and every other theory has been put in practice and tested. How varied the list of experiments! Government by the "elders" or "clan statesmen" independent of political parties; government by the "elders" in coalition with a party; government by the combined parties independently of the "clan statesmen"; government by a party in combination with a section of the "elders"; government by a few of the "clan statesmen" independent of the other section,—have all been tried, and

ended in failure. It seemed to be certain that, while the "elder statesmen" were living, real government by party and a cabinet obedient to parliamentary mandate could not exist. Nevertheless, the men of 1868, already greatly diminished by death, cannot live forever (Saigo, the youngest, died only a few weeks ago), and the principle of government by party has been practically recognized.

The last House of Representatives, though the only one that lived the full length of its legal life, did no particular credit to parliamentary institutions, and the nation saw its dissolution without grief. In the elections of August, 1902, the new law of voting went into operation for the first time. It was more favorable to the expression of minor constituencies. It required a candidate to appeal to a whole prefecture instead of to a small district, while the ballot, instead of being stamped and open, was secret. With commendable order the elections were held throughout the Empire, though the great rainstorms in the south prevented the full results from being quickly known. The results show that, while almost all of the old members of the Lower House stood for election, only about one-fourth of them were returned. Other interesting results followed, but what is of supreme importance is that government by party is now possible to the Japanese, because, for the first time in their history, one party is paramount. The Ito Association of Friends of the Constitution completely dominates the situation. Above Progressists, Independents, Imperialists, and minor groups, the Seiyu-kai has not only a majority, but a plurality. Nevertheless, the Progressists have a minority so respectable in numbers, strong in organization, and rich in abilities, and under such astute leadership, that the Ito party will have to be both wise and moderate. The latest returns distribute the seats as follows: Seiyu-kai, 192; Progressists, 104; Imperialists, 20; Independents, 59; and one invalid election—the total being 376.

Meanwhile, the Katsura ministry has developed such personal fitness for office and such shining talent in execution, that it has been wondered whether the Premier and his assistants would at once hand over their office and power to others. Yet no one doubts that they will. With the incoming of a purely party ministry, "the elders" will retire from executive activity, and younger men, educated for the most part in Western countries, will guide the ship of state. The vital questions to come before the Diet in No-

vember, 1902, are the expansion of the country's trade and industries, the reduction or maintenance of the present amount of the land tax, the increase of the navy, and the general fulfilment of the tremendously ambitious programme outlined after the war with China in 1894-95. Victory in war is always costly, sometimes as much so as defeat; and since Japan triumphed and became a "Power," she must advance or retreat, and the latter word is not in her vocabulary. A definite stalwart foreign policy is demanded by her new position. A wise home policy is vitally necessary. It is not as to the end that Japanese parties differ, it is only as to means. The Progressists demand right principle rather than material show, even though progress be at a slower pace. They are bent on securing parliamentary supremacy. Despite the overwhelming numbers of the Seiyu-kai, they are less homogeneous in composition, and even so profoundly experienced and so superbly equipped and "all around" a statesman as Marquis Ito may have more difficulty with his party than in coping with the general political situation. This requires sound finances and popular content at home, and power to curb Russia on the Asian continent, or, at least, to retard the movement of the Muscovite glacier.

It seems evident that the logic of fact and the overwhelming influence of the English-speaking nations, under whose tutelage the majority of the newer generation of Japanese scholars and publicists have been reared, must dominate the situation. Japan will then be in reality a nation with representative institutions and parliamentary government. Meanwhile, the student of Japanese history, and the well-wisher of the most hopeful nation in Asia, must be thankful for the conservatism of the "elders" and of Marquis Ito, which has so long guided the nation to its education, its strengthening, and its ultimate advantage. Their record is a noble one, and their fame as constructive statesmen sure. Nor can one who has had a hand in helping to lay the foundations of that public-school "education," which the Japanese themselves a generation ago declared to be "the basis of all progress," falter in his faith that Japan will yet solve nobly the problem of transit from mediævalism to the modern life of the "living nations."

WM. ELLIOT GRIFFIS.